

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GABORO 01499 081459Z
ACTION CU-03

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
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INFO USIA WASHDC

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DEPT FOR DIRECTOR OF CU/AF RELPH FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SCUL SEDU SREF BC
SUBJ: COUNSELING ASSISTANCE

REF: USIA 18115

1. YOUR RECENT VISIT AND SYMPATHETIC INSIGHTS INTO OUR SITUATION HERE, PARTICULARLY YOUR INTEREST IN STUDENT REFUGEES, PROMPTS ME TO CALL YOUR PERSONAL ATTENTION TO REFTEL NOTIFICATION THAT POST MUST CEASE EMPLOYMENT OF ALVARO DOMINGOS WHO HAS FULFILLED SUCH A VALUABLE COUNSELING ROLE OVER PAST SIX MONTHS. YOU HAVE PERSONALLY SEEN THE CONTINUING TRAGIC WASTE OF HUMAN RESOURCES AMONG REFUGEES HERE WHOSE SINGLEMINDED DESIRE IS TO PURSUE THEIR EDUCATION. FROM AMONG THESE REFUGEES WE HAVE

IDENTIFIED SSVERAL HUNDRED HIGHLY-QUALIFIED, INTELLECTUALLY-VIGOROUS AND STRONGLY-MOTIVATED STUDENTS WHOSE TALENTS REPRESENT A TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL ASSET FOR THEIR COUNTRY AND FOR SEVERAL OF WHOM WE CONTINUE TO HOPE SOME DIRECT U.S. SCHOLARSHIP ASSISTANCE MAY EVENTUALLY BE MADE AVAILABLE.

2. REFTEL SUGGESTION THAT WE PROPOSE "COUNSELING CONTRACT" FOR CU/YSS FUNDING IS ONE WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPLORE FULLY.
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SUCH A CONTRACT WOULD REPRESENT AN IMPORTANT INVESTMENT REFLECTING FAITH IN THE FFGRE OF NEW U.S. POLICY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND IN STUDENTS OF THIS REGION. AS IN MANY CU PROGRAMS, NO ONE CAN PROMISE AN IMMEDIATE PAYOFF -- ALTHOUGH THE IMMEDIATE LOSS IS TANGIBLE. OUR HOPE IS THAT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM YOUR VISIT MIGHT COINCIDE WITH REFTEL PROPOSAL AND LEAD TO AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS THAT WOULD ENABLE US TO ENGAGE ONE

COUNSELOR, OR PERHAPS TWO, TO MEET WITH STUDENTS WHO CONTINUE TO COME OR WRITE TO EMBASSY AND/OR USIS REQUESTING INFORMATION ON STUDY IN U.S. DEMAND FOR COUNSELING WOULD PLACE SERIOUS HARDSHIP ON USIS STAFF IN ABSENCE OF FULL-TIME COUNSELOR AND WOULD BADLY HAMPER OPERATIONS.

3. FOR REASONS OF ECONOMY (AS WELL AS FAMILIARITY WITH LOCAL SCENE, ITS OFFICIALS AND STUDENTS, WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT COUNSELOR POSITIONS BE FILLED BY PERSONS RECRUITED LOCALLY, HOPEFULLY A U.S.-TRAINED LOCAL OR FROM AMONG REFUGEES -- AS WAS THE CASE WITH THE INCUMBENT. WE ARE, OF COURSE, SENSITIVE TO IMPORTANCE OF EMPLOYEE HAVING PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND AND TRAINING, INCLUDING (AS NOTED) EDUCATION IN THE U.S. WE ARE ALSO AWARE OF IMPORTANCE ON THEIR BEING RELIABLE, TRUSTWORTHY AND LOYAL EMPLOYEES.

4. IN THIS CONNECTION, YOU WILL UNDERSTAND OUR DISAPPOINTMENT

WITH THE WAY DOMINGOS HAS BEEN DEALT WITH, I.E., BY CUTTING OFF HIS PAY. IT IS ESPECIALLY IRONIC THAT THE VERY QUALITIES THAT MADE HIM SO VALUABLE IN BUILDING GOOD WILL AND UNDERSTANDING FOR THE U.S., I.E., BY SYMPATHETICALLY COUNSELING OR RESPONDING TO LITERALLY SEVERAL HUNDRED STUDENTS WHO CAME OR WROTE TO EMBASSY/USIS ABOUT STUDY IN THE UNITED STATES, ARE THE VERY QUALITIES THAT REQUIRED THAT HE BE DISMISSED, NAMELY, (A) THE FACT HE WAS HIMSELF A REFUGEE, AND (B) LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT HE HAD STUDIED IN THE U.S. THESE QUALITIES ENABLED HIM TO RELATE TO STUDENTS; THEY ALSO DELAYED THE SECURITY CLEARANCE WHICH REPORTEDLY IS CAUSE OF DISMISSAL. IN ALL CANDOR, THE CLEARANCE REQUIREMENT FOR SOMEONE IN STUDENT COUNSELOR POSITION APPEARS NOT ONLY EXCESSIVELY RIGID, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SATISFY IN THE CASE OF SOMEONE COMING (AS MOST REFUGEES DO) FROM A COUNTRY IN REVOLUTION OR WHO WAS ENGAGED IN EXTENSIVE TRAVEL AND RESIDENCE ABROAD. IT IS ALSO A REQUIREMENT THAT BEARS NO RELATION TO EFFECTIVENESS IN PERFORMANCE OF THE TASK, THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF WHICH IS TO CONVEY INFORMATION IN A CREDIBLE AND SYMPATHETIC MANNER ABOUT ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR U.S. UNIVERSITIES. REGRETABLY, DOMINGOS' DISMISSAL TYPIFIES OUR OVERALL EFFORT IN REFUGEE EDUCATION WHICH, DESPITE A DOZEN EXPERTS' VISITS AND STUDIES HERE OVER PAST SEVEN MONTHS, HAS NOT BROUGHT ASSISTANCE FOR A SINGLE REFUGEE TO STUDY IN THE U.S.

5. YOUR ASSISTANCE IN FACILITATING CONTINUATION OF COUNSELING SERVICES WOULD BE OF GREAT PRACTICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL IMPORTANCE BY SHOWING A FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PLIGHT OF STUDENT REFUGEES HERE FROM POLITICAL OPPRESSION, WHO SEEK NOTHING MORE FROM US THAN THE

OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE THEIR STUDIES.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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